



— State of —
North Dakota

Office of the Governor

John Hoeven
Governor

December 11, 2003

President George Bush
The White House
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

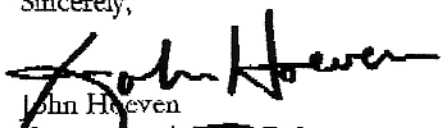
As governors of states with prominent sugar industries, we are writing to you with the urgent request to exclude sugar tariffs from the U.S.- Central American Free Trade Agreement currently being negotiated by your trade officials.

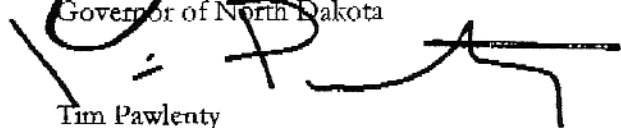
Sugar producers are adamant that sweetener trade policy needs to be removed from consideration in the CAFTA agreement, as its inclusion would effectively devastate the U.S. industry and the rural communities where it operates. Sweetener trade discussions need to be reserved for the World Trade Organization talks.

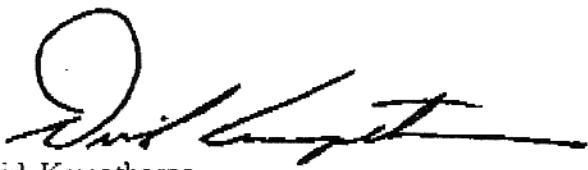
Our farmers and companies that produce sweeteners are highly competitive on a multinational basis, and have repeatedly expressed a willingness to compete with sugar producers in other countries; however, this competition must be on a fair economic footing. Our farmers cannot compete with other countries' treasuries.

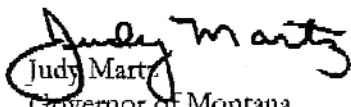
Mr. President, sugar production and agriculture in general are important to our states' economic health. There are 11,000 sugar beet producers and 372,000 sweetener industry jobs in crucial states that are closely watching the outcome of the trade talks. The sugar industry is very concerned that their vital commercial interests are not being considered in these negotiations. Our states and the sugar industry very much need your support on this important issue. We appreciate your attention and assistance on this matter.

Sincerely,


John Hoeven
Governor of North Dakota


Tim Pawlenty
Governor of Minnesota


Dirk Kempthorne
Governor of Idaho


Judy Martz
Governor of Montana

cc: Mr. Karl Rove, Senior Advisor to the President
U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick,
Agriculture Ambassador Allen Johnson

600 E Boulevard Ave
Bismarck, ND 58505-0001
Phone: 701.328.2200
Fax: 701.328.2205
www.discovernd.com